

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MADRID 04762 231122Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 MCT-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00
NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07
L-03 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USSS-00
SY-05 DHA-02 /062 W
-----056320 231125Z /10

O R 231033Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 751
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION NATO

UNCLAS MADRID 4762

USEEC

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PINS, SP
SUBJECT: YBARRA ASSASSINATION

1. JAVIER DE YBARRA, THE 64-YEAR OLD BASQUE FINANCIER AND
FORMER MAYOR OF BILBAO KIDNAPPED MAY 20 BY AN ETA TERRORIST
GROUP, WAS SHOT IN THE BACK OF THE HEAD LAST SATURDAY.
HIS BODY WAS DISCOVERED YESTERDAY NEAR A MOUNTAIN CABIN,
IN THE SAME AREA SEARCHED PREVIOUSLY IN RESPONSE TO ETA
MESSAGES. HIS FAMILY HAD CONTINUED IN CONTACT WITH THE
KIDNAPPERS UNTIL RECENTLY, BUT WERE UNABLE TO RAISE THE
\$15 MILLION RANSOM DEMANDED. ACCORDING TO AN UNCONFIRMED
REPORT, A SMALLER RANSOM MAY ACTUALLY HAVE BEEN PAID, TO
NO AVAIL.

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2. YBARRA, A CONSERVATIVE AND UNPOPULAR WITH BASQUE
NATIONALIST FORCES DURING HIS POLITICAL CAREER, WAS
NONETHELESS A POOR CHOICE FOR POLITICAL ASSASSINATION.
HIS INVOLVEMENT WITH THE FRANCO REGIME WAS MAINLY IN THE
DISTANT PAST, AND WAS IN ANY CASE NOT REMARKABLE FOR ITS
SEVERITY. HIS LIFE-LONG INVOLVEMENT WITH PROTECTION

OF YOUTH HAD EARNED HIM INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION; HE WAS PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF JUVENILE MAGISTRATES AT THE TIME OF HIS DEATH, IN WHICH CAPACITY HE HAD BEEN RECEIVED AND COMPLIMENTED BY QUEEN ELIZABETH II.

3. THE KILLING HAS AROUNDED UNIVERSAL CONDEMNATION, AS DID THAT OF BASQUE BUSINESSMAN BERAZADI LAST YEAR. THOUGH KILLING BERAZADI WAS A MISTAKE, THE REACTION AGAINST THE ETA WAS SOON LOST IN THE CONTINUING TENSION. NOW GIVEN THE CHANGE IN CIRCUMSTANCES, PARTICULARLY THE ADVENT OF DEMOCRACY, AND THE AMNESTYING OF SO MANY BASQUE PRISONERS, THE EFFECTS OF THIS PUBLIC REVULSION COULD BE MORE LONG-LASTING. A SPOKESMAN FOR THE BASQUE BRANCH OF THE PSOE ON NATIONAL TELEVISION TERMED THE KILLING NOT ONLY A CRIME, BUT AN "IRREPARABLE POLITICAL ERROR" BY ETA. STABLER

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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TAGS: PINT, PINS, SP, (YE YBARRA, JAVIER), (YBARRA, JAVIER DE)
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